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ABSTRACT

A summary of requirements and provisions of early childhood and basic skills programs and a framework for and the requisites of thorough and systematic planning which can be held accountable for what the student learns are provided in this document. A plan that clearly establishes criteria for what needs to be done and why, the actual planning model, involvement in planning, and a flow chart of major planning activities are discussed. A list of twelve key planning tasks for the programs are noted. This includes the re-examination of the overall framework of the existing provisions for planning in each school and in the district. Another section specifies portions of the law and offers suggestions for assisting districts and schools to implement the intent of the new legislation for developing and improving programs for children or for adults. Areas that are covered here are advisory groups, instructional programs, personnel, educational policy, individualized diagnostic instruction, staff development and inservice training, the use of parents in the classroom and in home visitation, and parent education. Extensive coordination and cooperation being considered to be required for the formation and implementation of the program, this document purportedly provides a form of practical assistance and direction in accomplishing Florida's educational goals.
(Author/AM)

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GUIDELINES
FOR
ASSISTING DISTRICTS IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BASIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
1975

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Department of Education
Tallahassee, Florida
Ralph D. Turlington, Commissioner

Division of Public Schools
Bureau of Curriculum and Personnel Development
Early Childhood and Elementary Education Section

This public document was promulgated at an annual cost of $1,818.14 or $1.81 per copy to provide Florida school districts with guidelines to assist them in planning and implementing their early childhood and basic skills development.

FOREWORD

Early childhood and basic skills development is the first priority of Florida's public schools. In support of this top priority, the 1975 Florida Legislature passed a substantial, commanding act (Section 230.2311, Florida Statutes, as amended by Chapter 75-284, Laws of Florida) which provides the framework and requisites for planning, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive early childhood and basic skills development programs.

The following guidelines are the result of many people's dedicated efforts to provide support, leadership, and direction for better early childhood and basic skills development programs. School district staffs and Department of Education personnel contributed greatly in the development of these guidelines.

As a consequence, these guidelines should provide invaluable assistance to school district personnel in offering such programs and should serve to delineate the essential procedures and activities which are necessary for the fulfillment of legislative intent. The opportunity provided by this legislation to advance student achievement should prove to be extremely rewarding as results are demonstrated.

As we continue to build upon current early childhood and basic skills development program strengths, we will be fulfilling our commitment to pursue educational excellence for Florida citizens, particularly during the most formative early childhood years within the public education system.

Ralph D. Turlington
Commissioner

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PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is three-fold:

I. To provide a summary of the requirements and provisions for Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Programs as contained in Section 230.2311, Florida Statutes as amended by Chapter 75-284, Laws of Florida.

II. To promote a stronger commitment to the process of planning for Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Programs.

III. To offer suggestions for assisting districts and schools to implement the intent of the new legislation for developing and improving programs for children or for adults, as appropriate.

SECTION I

CHAPTER 75-284, LAWS OF FLORIDA

Summary of Requirements and Provisions for Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Programs

Chapter 75-284, Law of Florida amends several sections of existing law relating to Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Programs in Florida public schools. The term "basic skills," as used in the Act, is defined to include, although not necessarily limited to, the areas of reading, writing, language arts, arithmetic, measurement, and problem solving. The following is a summary of the changes or additions.

Section 230.23, Florida Statutes - Powers and Duties of School Board. Paragraphs (o) and (p) are added to subsection (4) in this section.

Paragraph (o) requires school boards to adopt and execute a plan for early childhood and basic skills development which provides for an individual diagnostic approach to instruction in kindergarten through grade three. The program is to be designed so that every child will have opportunity to achieve that level of mastery in the basic skills which his physical, mental, and emotional capacities permit.

Paragraph (p) requires the appointment of teacher aides to assist members of the instructional staff in kindergarten through grade three, to the extent feasible as determined by the school board.

Section 230.2311, Florida Statutes - Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Plans; Objectives; Provisions. (Substantial rewording)

1. The Department of Education shall evaluate and recommend possible restructuring of early childhood education in Florida in order to develop programs which shall adequately meet the needs of each pupil.

2. The first priority of the public schools of Florida shall be to assure that all Floridians, including adults as the capacities of the program permit, shall achieve mastery of the basic skills, to the extent their individual physical, mental, and emotional capacities permit.

3. Each school district shall develop an early childhood and basic skills development plan, incorporate the plan as a component of the district comprehensive educational plan, and submit the plan to the Department of Education for review and comment.

4. Each district plan shall include objectives to assure that each pupil shall be enrolled in a program designed to meet his individual needs and shall achieve that level of mastery of the basic skills his capacities will permit.

5. The plan shall be implemented district wide by the 1976-77 school year.

6. The plan shall be developed cooperatively by school administrators, teachers, parents and other community groups or individuals having interest or expertise in the field of early childhood education or basic skills development.

7. The plan shall include:

   a. provisions for increasing the number of adults assisting in kindergarten through grade three

   b. emphasis on instruction in basic skills including direct individual and small group instruction in reading and computational skills

   c. use of personnel referred to above (7a) during instruction in computational skills and in reading skills

   d. provisions for fulfillment of the goals for education as adopted by the State Board of Education including evidence of early childhood and basic skills development as the public schools' first priority

e. emphasis on an individualized diagnostic approach to instruction

f. attention to the emotional and social development of each child

g. defined measurable program objectives

h. assessment of educational needs

i. provisions for coordinating and integrating the public school program with other public and nonpublic early childhood agencies

j. provisions for allocation and coordination of all district resources with the objectives of the plan

k. provisions for staff development and inservice training as follows:

(1) Each school board in cooperation with the Teacher Education Centers, when available, and with the Department of Education is required to develop a program of inservice training for all teachers in kindergarten through grade three

(2) The inservice program must be designed to enable teachers
(a) to recognize language arts and computational needs,
(b) to apply prescriptive techniques in meeting such needs and
(c) to effectively utilize aides, volunteers, and paraprofessionals in the classroom

(3) Effective July, 1976 each teacher must receive such training as a condition of continued certification

(4) Each school board is required to develop training programs for aides and such other personnel who serve in the program.

l. provisions for program evaluation by both professional and lay personnel

m. provisions for use of parents in the classroom and for home visitations and parent education

Section 228.041, Florida Statutes - Specific definitions.

Subsections (19) and (25) of this section are amended to broaden definitions as follows:

1. Subsection (19) requires the inclusion of the gifted as exceptional students
2. Subsection (25) broadens the definition of "teacher aides" to include parents and others who assist in the classroom as instructional assistants to the teacher, whether paid or unpaid

Section 231.141, Florida Statutes - Teacher Aides. (Substantial rewording)

1. encourage school boards to appoint teacher aides to assist teachers in kindergarten through grade three
2. require teacher aides to attend appropriate training programs developed by the district, and
3. specify that paid teacher aides are entitled to the same rights accorded noninstructional employees of the board

SECTION II

Planning

Following the establishment of the requirement in 1972 that each district develop a Comprehensive Educational Plan (Section 236.02(7), Florida Statutes), Florida schools and school districts have, more than ever before, been engaged in activities designed to improve the planning capability of the districts. The result has been greater utilization of systematic planning and management techniques.

The Legislature recognizes that an early childhood and basic skills development program is an integral, yet critical, part of a total local educational program. As such it is essential that the planning for the early childhood and basic skills development segment of the district program be coordinated with the planning for all other segments. Also, by articulating school level and district level planning activities, it is possible to avoid duplication and overlap in the utilization of valuable resources (staff-time-space-funds).

Through requiring the district plan for early childhood and basic skills development programs to be a part of the district comprehensive educational plan by 1976-77, the importance of thorough and systematic planning is emphasized. Such generally accepted principles of organization and functions of management as planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling become substantially more significant to key persons when they are faced with the challenge of putting them into practice in their own areas of responsibility.

In order to have early childhood and basic skills development program that can be held accountable for what a student learns, more attention must be given to planning and managing such programs to ensure that they meet the actual needs of each person.

It is strongly recommended, therefore, that each district assess its present capability for meeting the intent of this legislation. A "plan for planning" should be designed that clearly establishes:

1. What needs to be done and why?
2. Who is to be involved and how?
3. Who is presently doing what and when?
4. Who is to inform whom and about what?
5. Who is to judge results and by what standards?

PLANNING MODEL

Each district may use any planning model it finds to be adequate and effective in facilitating the development of the district's early childhood and basic skills development component of its Comprehensive Plan. The Florida Department of Education planning model may be utilized by any district wishing to do so. This model which is familiar to personnel in most districts is based on standard principles of systems analysis and can easily be adapted for use at any level -- classroom, grade, department, school or districts.

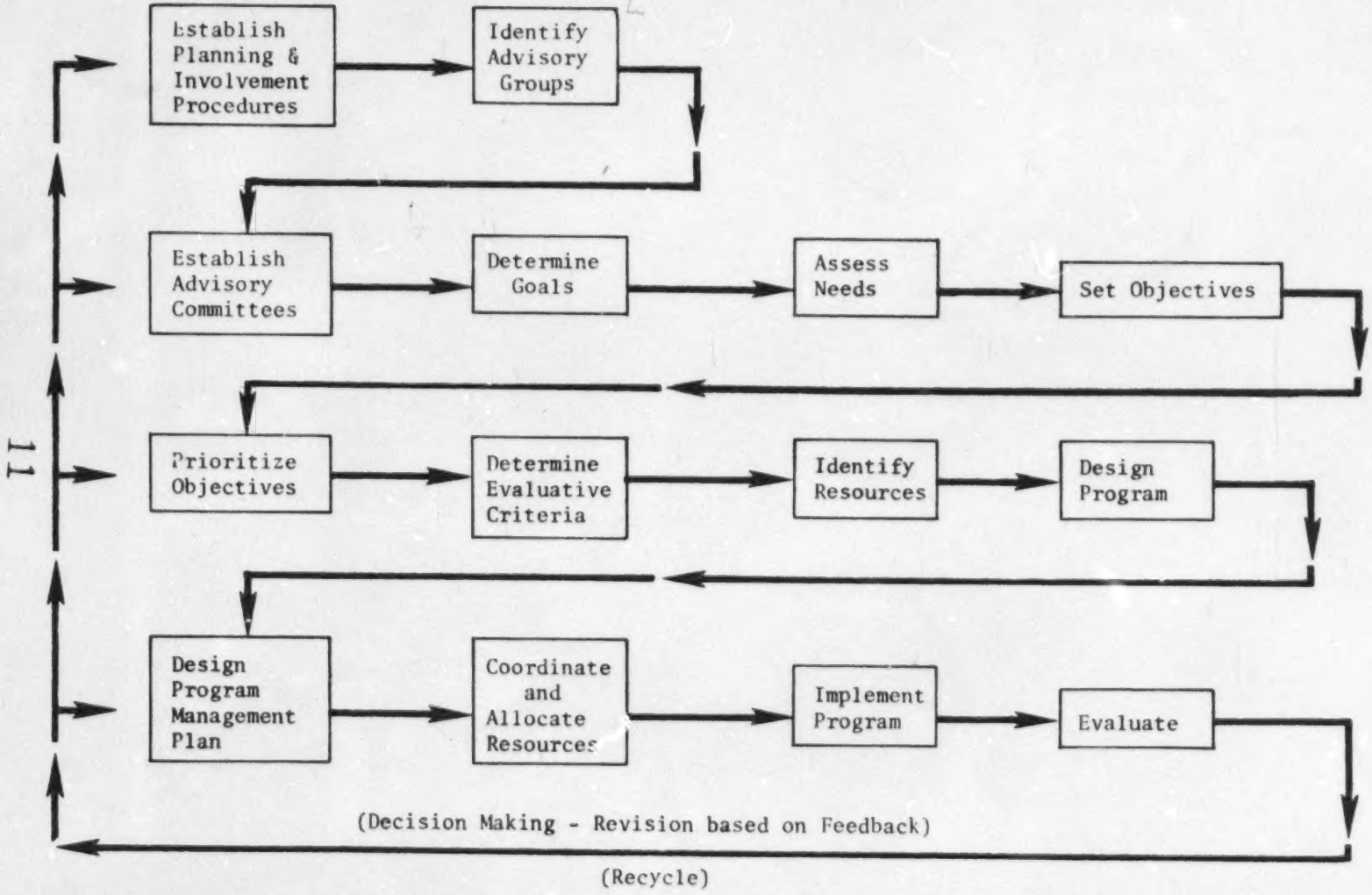
In addition to the Florida Department of Education Planning Model and others the district have found useful, the following Flow Chart offers suggestions regarding an implementation sequence for major planning activities to be undertaken in developing the early childhood and basic skills development component of the District Comprehensive Plan.

Basic to the development of any plan -- whether for an activity, program, project or an entire school system -- is a 'commitment to planning.' This means a willingness to examine all relevant factors, an open attitude toward change and acceptance of the obligation to make planning an on-going and continuous process.

INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING

Planners need help -- they should never attempt to plan in a vacuum. Involvement of persons to be affected by the plan as well as those responsible for implementation and evaluation is necessary if any plan is to accomplish its purpose. Early childhood and basic skills development program planning affects the entire community because the target clients are the most important asset of any parent, family, or community -- children. Therefore, in structuring a framework for planning for this crucial time in the educational experience of students, ample consideration must be given to broad involvement. Districts should examine their existing provisions for involvement and determine their adequacy and effectiveness potential for meeting (1) the level and scope of involvement expressed in the legislative intent, and, (2) the district needs for input so that the program can be responsive, efficient and effective.

FLOW CHART OF MAJOR PLANNING ACTIVITIES



SUMMARY OF KEY PLANNING TASKS FOR

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BASIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

1. Re-examine the overall framework of the existing provisions for planning in each school and in the district. Determine that appropriate procedures are made for planned staff and community involvement in planning the early childhood and basic skills development program.

2. Special provisions should be made to assure appropriate community, parent, teacher and school administration involvement in all phases of the planning and development of the program.

3. Establish early childhood and basic skill development philosophy, goals and long-range objectives based on the goals of education in Florida and what the community believes the purpose of these programs to be.

4. Conduct an analysis of existing programs and services and determine needs. (See: Assessing Needs in Developing Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Plan and Programs, 1975).

5. Place needs in priority order.

6. Establish annual (short-range) objectives and develop criteria for measurement.

7. Identify all available resources and constraints.

8. Generate, analyze and select alternatives.

9. Design or re-design programs to meet objectives.

10. Develop a management plan for program implementation which specifies what, when, who, why and how.

11. Implement program in all schools as designed by 1976-77.

12. Evaluate, modify as necessary and recycle.

SECTION III

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSISTING DISTRICTS

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(2) --- In implementing the intent of this section, each school district shall include a plan for early childhood and basic skills development programs in the planned school program and comprehensive educational plan required in ss. 230.23(3), 230.33(5), and 236.02(7). The early childhood and basic skills development programs component of the district comprehensive educational plan shall be developed cooperatively by school administrators, teachers, parents, and other community groups or individuals having an interest in the programs or having expertise in the field of early childhood education or basic skills development

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NOTE: THIS COLUMN THROUGHOUT SECTION III CONTAINS DIRECT QUOTATIONS FROM SECTION 230.2311, FLORIDA STATUTES, AS AMENDED BY CHAPTER 75-284, LAWS OF FLORIDA.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

The school board should formally adopt procedures for utilizing appropriate advisory groups which may already be in existence to facilitate cooperative planning for early childhood and basic skills development programs. If such groups do not exist, provisions should be made for their establishment.

Individual school advisory committees are highly desirable and may be the most effective means for obtaining direct community, parent, teacher and administration involvement.

Such committees should be broadly representative of the community served so that ample opportunity exists for input by: groups and/or populations with diverse ethnic, racial and economic background; persons representing business, health and social service interests; persons representing private preschool programs and persons representing all levels, programs, and services of the public school system.

The advisory committee(s) should be as involved as possible in the following planning and developmental activities:

1. development of a time line for planning the early childhood and basic skills component of the district comprehensive plan
2. district-wide needs assessment
3. development of district program goals and objectives
4. strategies for implementation of the program and
5. strategies for and involvement in an evaluation of the program

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (a) *An increase in the number of adults assisting in the primary classroom, kindergarten and grades one through three, through use of teacher aides, parent volunteers, foster grandparents, paraprofessionals, or other similar personnel.*	A determination should be made of the actual current usage of the type personnel referred to herein. Information should be collected from each school which would reveal: the number of each type being utilized, what they are doing, how obtained (fund source-if paid), time schedule for each type. Surveys to determine availability of, and services rendered by these personnel would be helpful. Establish an overall long-range plan regarding the use of aides and other similar personnel in the school system. Local, school and district commitments should be developed to increase, by 1976-77, the extent to which these personnel are presently being utilized as primary (K-3) classroom assistants. Section I of these guidelines further clarifies the emphasis being placed by this legislation on the establishment of school staffing patterns which supports a greatly reduced adult/student ratio.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (b) *Emphasis on instruction in basic skills including direct individual and small group instruction in reading and computations skills.*	In planning to meet the intent of this requirement, the district and each school should determine that classroom procedures are placing strong emphasis on individual and small group instruction to meet identified needs of students in reading, and computational skills. Instructional programs should be closely examined with a view toward increasing the scope and number of activities designed to enable students to achieve a level of competence in each instructional area that is appropriate for each pupils' age, maturity, physical, mental and emotional capacity. Curricula also need to be examined, planned and implemented in terms of the sequence of learning activities from one age/grade level to the next. Flexibility should be preserved that will allow students to move through a high quality program on a continuous progress plan at rates commensurate with ability and interest levels.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (b) *(continued) Emphasis on instruction in basic skills including direct individual and small group instruction in reading and computations skills.*	As indicated in the statute and as described elsewhere in these guidelines, it is essential that teachers and other assisting staff be provided training which enables them to deal more effectively with an individualized approach to instruction.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (c) *Use of personnel as described in paragraph (a) during instruction in computational skills and in reading skills.*	The personnel referred to are: teacher aides, parent volunteers, foster grandparents and (other appropriate) paraprofessionals. Most school districts have experienced the use of some type of 'assisting personnel'. Therefore, the concept is not new. What may be new is the requirement that use shall be made of personnel other than fully certified professional staff in conducting learning activities in specific instructional areas, namely computational skills and reading skills. It is intended that these, and any other specific teaching tasks, be conducted with close professional staff supervision. Detailed planning at the classroom, grade and/or department levels in each school can result in the identification and implementation of numerous ways that various nonprofessional staff can contribute directly to the teaching-learning process. A few suggested ways include: 1. Introducing or reinforcing vocabulary words by using word and picture cards 2. Reading stories and story telling 3. Preparing specific materials for individual students or small groups 4. Recording observation made for use in assessing with the teacher daily/weekly progress and specific problem areas related to successful completion of certain sequenced learning tasks

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(c) (continued) Use of personnel as described in paragraph (a) during instruction in computational skills and in reading skills.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

5. Developing, with a student, special individually student selected projects
6. Developing and presenting demonstrations that have multi-lingual-multi-cultural significance based on the cultural backgrounds of our pluralistic society
7. Serving as interpreters where non-English speaking students are present
8. Playing computational concept games with students
9. Assisting individual pupils with selected materials, requiring student response.

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(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(d) Fulfillment of the goals for education in Florida as adopted by the State Board of Education; provided that early childhood and basic skills be the first priority of Florida public schools.

Education Policy for the State of Florida, approved by the State Board of Education in March, 1975 contains the Goals of Education, listed in priority order. Orientation to this policy statement should be provided for all personnel of the school system.

Initial workshops with advisory groups, new personnel and all 'assisting personnel' should include a thorough acquaintance with, interpretation of and explanation of the purpose of state goals.

District goals should be related to state goals.

Emphasis should be placed on the mastery of the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic by all persons, on all levels, to the extent that their individual physical, mental and emotional capacities permit.

There are several characteristics of a district school system that can be examined to determine if the system is, in fact, recognizing early childhood and basic skills development as the number one priority. These may include but are not limited to:

1. Community knowledge of and attitude toward the program and services provided by the system

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (d) *(continued) Fulfillment of the goals for education in Florida as adopted by the State Board of Education; provided that early childhood and basic skills be the first priority of Florida public schools.*	2. Policy development that relates to the program 3. Professional and supportive staff attitude toward and commitment to the program 4. Published statements of district annual and long-range goals and priorities 5. Evidence of resource allocations to support the program 6. The degree to which the basic skills of communication and computation have been mastered. An assessment of progress in attaining the goals should be made at least annually. In achieving these goals, alternative procedures which utilize the strengths of the individual, and at the same time consider the total person, should be used in meeting an identified need.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (e) *Emphasis on an individualized diagnostic approach to instruction.*	Emphasis shall be placed on continual and appropriate diagnoses and shall be prescriptive so that early identification and intervention can occur. This emphasis is crucial to a program of prevention. Diagnosis: Initial diagnosis can be accomplished in a number of ways including: 1. Utilizing existing information usually found in cumulative records, including but not limited to test scores, appropriate physical and social-emotional data. 2. Administering informal or formal tests 3. Utilizing criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests 4. Using teacher judgement, based on interaction with and observation of students

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(e) (continued) Emphasis on an individualized diagnostic approach to instruction.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

5. Conferring with others -- parents, previous teachers, student services personnel and other supplementary or supportive personnel, including health, nutritional, and custodial personnel

6. Using other methods or combining some or all of the preceding methods

7. Referring suspected exceptional students according to the district procedures document upon completion of the initial diagnosis mentioned above.

Caution should be taken against inappropriate diagnosis due to a student's ethnic, racial, sexual, cultural, economic or language differences. Solid evidence should be recorded in support of particular diagnosis and resulting individualized prescriptions.

Prescription:

Provide individualized prescriptions for each student according to each learner's on-going diagnosed needs, talents, interests, and abilities. Prescriptions should be developed from a variety of appropriate curricula which utilize various instructional materials and approaches.

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(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(f) Emphasis on the basic skills development of each child, with attention given to the emotional and social development of each child.

Diagnosis:

Two generally accepted procedures can be helpful in obtaining information on each student's emotional and social development:

1. planned teacher observations based on carefully selected criteria
2. other measures or vehicles providing supportive evidence, including information obtained from the home and supplementary and supportive personnel

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (f) (continued) *Emphasis on the basic skills development of each child, with attention given to the emotional and social development of each child.*	Prescription: An as aid in providing for the emotional and social development of each child, the teacher should summarize pertinent data and information to provide a comprehensive view of each student's emotional and social development. Teachers should encourage a positive classroom atmosphere by reflecting a concern about, sensitivity to, and interest in fostering each student's sense of well-being and acceptance as an individual. Recognition of, understanding of, and respect for, the varying ethnic, social and economic background of students which support our pluralistic society, should receive prime emphasis. Staff should be apprised frequently of the need for confidential handling of student data and information.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (g) *Defined measurable program objectives.*	Information obtained from school and district-wide needs assessment and consideration of both state and district goals for education should serve as the basis for determining district objectives. Objectives should be included for student performance in reading, language arts, arithmetic, writing, measurement, and problem solving skills. The inclusion of objectives for all curricular areas is essential to assure balance, to provide a broad scope of learning opportunities for each student, and to offer alternative routes for achieving the basic skills. Process and/or performance objectives should be stated for staff development, parent and other adult involvement, parent education, program planning, implementation and evaluation. Objectives should be stated in language which is specific, unambiguous and capable of measurement or observation.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (h) *Assessment of educational needs.*	Parents, teachers, community resources and other appropriate district representatives should be directly involved in the needs assessment process. The advisory committee(s) should serve as a practical vehicle to achieve the necessary involvement. For a more comprehensive treatment of needs assessment in early childhood and basic skills development, and for examples of the type of data to be collected, see Assessing Needs in Developing Early Childhood and Basic Skills Development Plans and Program, Florida Department of Education, 1975.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (i) *Pertinent demographic data and information about early childhood programs, such as children's centers, day care, preschool, and child care programs in either the public or private sector, and the way in which such programs may be intergrated or coordinated with the district program.*	Determine demographic data and information about early childhood programs such as: 1. The types and qualities of programs being offered to children in the public and private sectors 2. The number of each 3. The location of each 4. The number of students served by each 5. The ages being served by each 6. The organizational structure of each 7. The "special" features or organizational patterns of each, if any 8. The needs of each 9. The records available for each student 10. The requirements for licensing which must be met by private, preschool and child care programs in the district. Involve, in the determination of demographic data, personnel such as: 1. Teachers and administrators of non-public school early childhood and basic skills development programs in master planning, through representation on advisory committee(s). 2. Teachers and administrators of these programs to participate in joint staff development activities (within legal restrictions). Establish a plan for coordination, correlation, and communication between these programs and the public school system including joint calendars, inservice days, record keeping, and transfer of records, whenever possible.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (j) *Allocation and coordination of all district resources with the objectives of the plan.*	Indicate, from needs assessment information and resources identified through advisory committee(s) membership or input channels, all existing programs and funding sources and show how these programs are coordinated and articulated to comprise the district's comprehensive early childhood and basic skills development program plan. Specify district categorical aid funds together with information describing how these funds have been incorporated into the total early childhood and basic skills development program plan. Reorganize, as necessary, for allocation of resources to meet program restructuring and regular program objectives. Include data on F.T.E. funding allocations and budget organization for school-level operations. Allocate and Coordinate district resources to meet the requirement for careful evaluation and restructuring of early childhood and basic skills development plans and programs to provide continuity for each student as he progresses through the public school system. NOTE: FOR A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE USE OF K-3 FUNDS, SEE IN THE APPENDIX, SECTION 22, SUBSECTION (3) OF SECTION 237.23, FLORIDA STATUTES, AS AMENDED BY CHAPTER 75-284.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (k) *Staff development and inservice training, including a requirement that all teachers in the primary grades, kindergarten and grades one through three,*	Identify on-going resource programs and plans for providing staff development and inservice training from needs assessment information. Investigate and consider additional resources for providing high quality staff development and inservice training. Plan for the training or re-training of all early childhood (K-3) instructional and support staff (district administrators, supervisors, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, volunteers, peer-teachers, etc.) to reflect identified program restructuring needs and objectives, as appropriate.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:	SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (k) *(continued) be trained in the use of aides, volunteers, and paraprofessionals in the classroom; in the recognition of language arts and computational needs; and in the application of prescriptive techniques in meeting such needs. Starting July 1, 1976, each teacher shall receive such training as a condition of continued certification.*	Reflect an awareness of the necessity for staff to understand and meet adequately the interests, needs, talents and abilities of all children, including strategies for meeting the needs of those having racial, ethnic, language or socio-economic backgrounds which are different from those of the staff. Cooperate with the teacher education centers, colleges, universities, and others, to develop necessary inservice training to meet the legislative intent to this act.
(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:* (l) *Evaluation of the programs by the school board, school administrators, and teachers, and by parents and other appropriate lay groups such as school advisory committees established pursuant to s 230.22.*	The advisory committee(s) established by the school board should assist any appropriately designated unit in fulfilling the intent of this component, following school board specified directions in planning for and being directly involved in the program evaluation. Evaluation should be done on a school by school basis, if at all possible. All early childhood and basic skills development program component areas should be evaluated to ensure compliance with legislative intent. Through this evaluation process: 1. Data should be collected, reviewed, and reported furnishing information regarding the degree of implementation, and fiscal expenditures.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:*

(ℓ) *(continued) Evaluation of the programs by the school board, school administrators, and teachers, and by parents and other appropriate lay groups such as school advisory committees established pursuant to s 230.22.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

2. Evaluation should occur on a continuous basis to yield information which can be used to upgrade or modify the program periodically.

3. Measuring instruments used (commercially or locally developed) should assess the attainment of identified program objectives.

Results of the early childhood and basic skills development plan and program evaluation should be shared with all involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the comprehensive plan, and be included in each school's annual report of school progress.

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(4) --- *The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:*

(m) *Use of parents in the classroom and for home visitations and parent education in order to strengthen the role of the family and the home in the education process and to develop a cooperative relationship between the family, the home, and the school.*

Use of Parents in the Classroom and for Home Visitation

Several ways to use parents are outlined below:

1. This concept has many dimensions and requires careful analysis. A thorough study should be undertaken with broad participation of the principal, teacher, and parents which focuses on the development of an exhaustive list of activities and tasks which could be performed by parents. Such a study must include identification of the training opportunities available and needed to properly prepare both teachers and parents to engage effectively in this joint venture.

2. On-going possibilities for direct classroom program involvement of parents should be obtainable through information gained from needs assessment.

3. Additional methods for parental involvement in the classroom program should be identified.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(m) (continued) Use of parents in the classroom and for home visitations and parent education in order to strengthen the role of the family and the home in the education process and to develop a cooperative relationship between the family, the home, and the school.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

4. The next step should be to follow up by planning for the purpose of implementing direct parent involvement activities which relate to the early childhood and basic skills development classroom program on a school-wide and district-wide basis.

5. School surveys (or other means) should be employed to ascertain the extent of, awareness of and interest of parents; classroom activities in which parents have a particular interest or capability; and an indication of the type and extent of training desired, or needed.

Special procedures should be implemented to explain, announce, or otherwise publicize the genuine desire of the school and districts to engage parents in the classroom program. Such explanations and announcements should be communicated through numerous community groups, social groups, community project leadership, churches, and civic groups, as well as through the various news media. All parents, including but not limited to non-English speaking and non-readers should be actively sought to serve in the classroom or for home visitation. Pre-service and in-service training programs should be provided for these parents.

Existing successful classroom situations that utilize parents should be reviewed to determine what makes them successful. Teachers (and the parents participating) may become the most useful source of trainers so that these successful practices can be exported to other classrooms, grades, and/or schools.

Implementation of parent involvement activities may well begin by providing numerous opportunities for parent observation in the classroom. Special person-to-person invitations to one or more parents to "come visit us today" could serve to begin or continue the dialogue between school and parents. Activities can be scheduled at the most convenient times and places to promote maximum involvement.

6. The utilization of parents for home visitation is an extension of their involvement as helpers in the classroom. This aspect of the legislative intent is probably the newest idea of all.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(m) (continued) Use of parents in the classroom and for home visitations and parent education in order to strengthen the role of the family and the home in the education process and to develop a cooperative relationship between the family, the home, and the school.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

Parents can be trained to render a great service in enhancing the family/home/school relationships. As visitors in the home, they can assist in helping other parents to understand the school program, serve as tutors, share educational activities for parents to pursue with their own children, solicit the assistance of other parents to become involved in various roles, assist the school in better understanding family goals and needs, conduct home-based parental education activities, provide guidance to parents with various problems, assist parents in securing available community services appropriate to identified needs and in other numerous ways establish a positive image of the school and its concern for the welfare of the child.

7. A means of reaching each and every parent in the community should be devised as well as a means of assisting parents in voicing and interpreting their concerns and/or areas of satisfaction with the school.

Parent membership on the advisory committee(s) as indicated previously should provide one appropriate vehicle for direct parental involvement in early childhood and basic skills development program evaluation.

Additional methods to broaden direct parent activities are encouraged.

Inservice and staff development-type activities which furnish guidance and training should be comprehensively planned and provided for parents. In addition, parents should be involved in either or both the classroom program or program evaluation activities.

NOTE: IN DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING THIS COMPONENT, UTILIZATION SHOULD BE MADE OF PERSONS WHO ARE PRESENTLY DELIVERING THESE SERVICES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

(4) --- The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(m) (continued) Use of parents in the classroom and for home visitations and parent education in order to strengthen the role of the family and the home in the education process and to develop a cooperative relationship between the family, the home, and the school.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION:

Parent Education

Parent education is essential. Some ways to achieve this goal are provided below.

1. **Identify any on-going educational programs within district or school from information gathered in needs assessment process.**

2. Investigate other established resources for implementing an early childhood and basic skills development parent education program component.

3. Explore community, community schools, high schools, community college, college and university, vocational education, and other local, state, or federal resources for assistance or for pursuing a joint planning/implementation approach.

4. Select one or both methods or programs for implementation locally. Some methods which have been used successfully to foster more effective parent education programs are:

   a. parent/teacher discussion groups
   b. informal group sessions in homes
   c. community school organized sessions
   d. television series
   e. seminars
   f. community college course offerings reflecting parent-selected locations and financial restrictions
   g. staff development sessions for professional staff or parents

5. Establish effective and systematic channels of communication (i.e., newsletters, parent-organized information sharing network, telephone network) to inform and encourage parents and other appropriate adults of the parent education offerings and benefits, including multi-lingual communication when needed to reach the non-English speaking and oral means of communication to reach those parents with limited reading abilities.

SECTION IV

CLARIFICATION OF IMPORTANT TERMS AS USED HEREIN

ASSURE . . . . . . Every action is being taken at the earliest possible time to guarantee each learner the opportunity to be successful.

CONTINUITY . . . . The orderly, planned, and articulated sequence of educational experiences -- as from one grade or year level or from one stage of development to another or from one subject matter content to another.

DIAGNOSIS . . . . The procedure by which the nature of a need or strength, whether physical, mental or social, is determined by discriminating study, examination, and observation.

EARY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION . . . . . . Educational experiences provided by the home, school and community at the preprimary and primary levels through the third grade.

INDIVIDUAL . . . . A prescribed and specifically planned curriculum which:

1) is based on a diagnosis of individual learning needs, abilities, talents, and interests
2) contains measurable objectives
3) interrelates subject area disciplines as applicable
4) engages the child in determining his own goals-objectives-activities
5) is continually assessed
6) is individually paced
7) includes provision for early, appropriate identification and intervention
8) provides for individual, small or large group instruction as appropriate

INTEGRATED . . . . Coordination of all aspects of each school and district program so that the goals, objectives and activities of each provide reinforcement for the total program.

NEED . . . . . . A deficiency or problem which, when identified through an assessment procedure, requires appropriate attention and action. NEEDS represent a discrepancy between present status and desired objectives; e.g., "what is" and "what ought to be".

PARENTS . . . . . Refers to any and all appropriate adults in the home who affect the child.

RESTRUCTURING . . The plan for program alteractions which may be needed to meet legislative intent and program goals and objectives.

NOTE: FOR AN EXTENSIVE TREATMENT OF VOCABULARY PERTINENT TO PLANNING, SEE HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN IN FLORIDA SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

As the preceding guidelines demonstrate, comprehensive early childhood and basic skills development programs require extensive coordination and cooperation. These guidelines provide one form of practical assistance and direction in accomplishing Florida's educational goals and, hopefully, will serve as a motivation for developing even better programs and ideas.

The staff of the Department of Education desires to be as responsive as possible to expressed districts needs in fulfilling the requirements and intent of this legislation.

(Substantial rewording of section. See s. 230.2311, F.S., 1974 Supp., for present text.)

230.2311 Legislative intent; early childhood and basic skills development plans; objectives; provisions.--

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature that the department evaluate and recommend possible restructuring of early childhood education in Florida in order to develop programs which will adequately meet the needs of each pupil. The Legislature recognizes that the early years of a pupil's education are crucial to his future, and that mastery of the basic skills of communication and computation is essential to the future educational and personal success of an individual. It is the further intent of the Legislature that the first priority of the public schools of Florida shall be to assure that all Floridians, to the extent their individual physical, mental, and emotional capacities permit, shall achieve mastery of the basic skills, including but not limited to, reading, writing, language arts, arithmetic, measurement, and problem solving. Early childhood and basic skills development programs shall be made available by the school districts to all school age children especially those enrolled in kindergarten and grades one through three and to Florida adults as the capacities of the programs permit.

(2) In implementing the intent of this section, each school district shall include a plan for early childhood and basic skills development programs in the planned school program and comprehensive educational plan required in ss. 230.23(3), 230.33(5), and 236.02(7). The early childhood and basic skills development programs component of the district comprehensive educational plan shall be developed cooperatively by school administrators, teachers, parents, and other community groups of individuals having an interest in the programs or having expertise in the field of early childhood education or basic skills development

(3) Each district's plan for early childhood and basic skills development programs shall be based on guidelines prepared by the Department of Education pursuant to chapter 74-238, Laws of Florida, and shall be submitted to the department for review and comment. The objectives of each plan shall be to assure that:

(a) Each pupil is enrolled in a program designed to meet his individual needs.

(b) Each pupil shallachieve that level of mastery of the basic skills which his capacities will permit.

(4) The early childhood and basic skills development program shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) An increase in the number of adults assisting in the primary classroom, kindergarten and grades one through three, through use of teacher aides, parent volunteers, foster grandparents, paraprofessionals, or other similar personnel.

(b) Emphasis on instruction in basic skills including direct individual and small group instruction in reading and computation skills.

(c) Use of personnel as described in paragraph (a) during instruction in computational skills and in reading skills.

(d) Fulfillment of the goals for education in Florida as adopted by the State Board of Education; provided that early childhood and basic skills development programs shall be the first priority of Florida public schools.

(e) Emphasis on an individualized diagnostic approach to instruction.

(f) Emphasis on the basic skills development of each child, with attention given to the emotional and social development of each child.

(g) Defined measurable program objectives.

(h) Assessment of educational needs.

(i) Pertinent demographic data and information about early childhood programs, such as children's centers, day care, pre-school, and child care programs in either in public or private sector, and the way in which such programs may be integrated or coordinated with the district program.

(j) Allocation and coordination of all district resources with the objectives of the plan.

(k) Staff development and inservice training, including a requirement that all teachers in the primary grades, kindergarten and grades one through three, be trained in the use of aides, volunteers, and paraprofessionals in the classroom; in the recognition of language arts and computational needs; and in the application of prescriptive techniques in meeting such needs. Starting July 1, 1976 each teacher shall receive such training as a condition of continued certification.

(l) Evaluation of the programs by the school board, school administrators, and teachers, and by parents and other appropriate lay groups such as school

advisory committees established pursuant to s. 230.22.

(m) Use of parents in the classroom and for home visitiation and parent education in order to strengthen the role of the family and the home in the education process and to develop a cooperative relationship between the family, the home and the school.

The early childhood and basic skills development programs shall be implemented by the 1976-77 school year.

(5) Each district school board, in cooperation with the teacher education centers established in ss. 231.600-231.610, and with the department of education, shall develop inservice training programs designed to enable teachers:

(a) To recognize language arts and computational needs.

(b) To apply prescriptive techniques in meeting such needs.

(c) To use aides, volunteers, and paraprofessionals effectively in the classroom.

(6) Each district school board, in cooperation with the department of education, shall develop training programs for teacher aides and other personnel who serve in the early childhood and basic skills development program.

Section 3. Subsections (19) and (25) of section 228.041; Florida Statutes, 1974 Supplement, are amended to read:

228.041 Specific definitions. --Specific definitions shall be as follows and wherever such defined words or terms are used in the Florida School Code they shall be used as follows:

(19) EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS. -- The term "exceptional student" means any child or youth who has been certified by a specialist qualified under regulations of the state board to examine students who may be unsuited for enrollment in a regular class of the public schools or is unable to be adequately educated in the public schools without the provision of special classes, instruction, facilities, or related services, or a combination thereof. The term "exceptional student" includes the following: the mentally retarded, the speech-impaired, the deaf and the hard of hearing, the blind and partially sighted, the crippled and other health impaired, the emotionally disturbed and socially maladjusted, also those with specific learning disabilities, and ~~may include~~ the gifted.

(25) TEACHER AIDE. -- A teacher aide is any person appointed assigned - by a school board to assist members of the instructional staff in carrying out their instructional or professional duties and responsibilities. Teacher aides may include parents, foster grandparents, paraprofessionals, students, and others who serve in the classroom as instructional or paraprofessional assistants to the teacher, whether such aides are paid workers or volunteers.

230.23 Powers and duties of school board. --The school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below.

(4) ESTABLISHMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATION OF SCHOOLS. --Adopt and provide for the execution of plans for the establishment, organization, and operation of the schools of the district as follows:

(o) Early childhood and basic skills development. --Provide for an individualized diagnostic approach to instruction in the primary grades, kindergarten and grades one through three, which shall permit every child to achieve that level of mastery of the basic skills, including, but not limited to, reading, writing, language arts, arithmetic, measurement, and problem solving, which his physical, mental, and emotional capacities permit.

(p) Teacher aides. --Appoint teacher aides to assist members of the instructional staff in the primary grades, kindergarten and grades one through three, to the extent feasible as determined by the school board.

Section 5. Section 231.141, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

(Substantial rewording of section. See s. 231.141, F.S., for present text.)

231.141 Teacher aides. --School boards are encouraged to appoint teacher aides to members of the instructional staff in the primary grades, kindergarten and grades one through three, in order to increase the number of personnel assisting in the classroom and to aid members of the instructional staff in such grades in carrying out their instructional and professional duties and responsibilities.

The school board may appoint teacher aides to assist members of the instructional staff in other grades. A teacher aide shall not be required to hold a teaching certificate but shall be required to attend the training program developed pursuant to s. 230.2311(6) (in reworded section) A teacher aide, while rendering services under the supervision of a certified teacher, shall be

accorded the same protection of laws as that accorded the certified teacher. Paid teacher aides employed by a school board shall be entitled to the same rights accorded non-instructional employees of the board.

Section 6. Section 231.15, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

231.15 Positions for which certificates required. --The State Board of Education shall have authority to classify school services and to prescribe regulations in accordance with which certificates shall be issued by the Department of Education to school employees who met the standards prescribed by such regulations for their class of service. Each person employed or occupying a position as school supervisor, helping teacher, principal, teacher, school librarian, or other position in which the employee serves in an instructional capacity in any public school of any district of this state shall hold the certificate required by law and by regulations of the state board in fulfilling the requirement of the law for the type of service rendered. However, the state selected noncertificated personnel to provide instructional services in the individual's field of speciality or to assist instructional staff members as teacher aides. Each person employed as a school nurse shall hold a license to practice nursing in the state, and each person employed as a school physician shall hold a license to practice medicine in the state.

Section 22. Subsection (3) of section 237.34, Florida Statutes, 1974 Supplement, is amended and subsection (4) is added to read:

237.34 Comprehensive information, accounting and reporting system.-

(3) COST REPORTING.--Each district shall report expenditures of funds on a school-by-school and on an aggregate-district basis in accordance with standards provided by the department. Definitions of program categories and cost elements to be reported shall be prescribed by regulations of the state board and shall include the programs set forth in section 26.081 (1)(c). ~~In the 1974-75 fiscal year, each district shall report to the Department of Education the percent and dollar amount of current operating funds of the Florida Education Finance Program, exclusive of categorical program funds and funds expended in the manner prescribed by section 236.081(4), expended by program-cost categories that generate the funds.~~ *In the 1975-76 fiscal year and each succeeding fiscal year, an amount equal to at least 80 percent of the funds generated by a district in the program-cost categories of kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 shall be expended in these program-cost categories in the district that generates the funds, and each district shall report to the Department of Education the percent and dollar amount of current operating funds of the Florida Education Finance Program, exclusive of categorical program funds and funds expended in the manner prescribed in section 236.081(4), expended by program-cost categories that generate the funds.* By the 1975-76 fiscal year, an amount equal to at least 70 percent of current operation funds of the Florida Education Finance Program, exclusive of categorical program funds and funds expended in the manner prescribed by section 236.081(4), shall be expended by program-cost categories in the district that generates the funds, and the school shall report similar expenditures and percents for basic programs. *Expenses for instruction in art, music, and physical education may be included within the amounts used to reach the percentages required for basic programs.* By the 1976-77 fiscal year, 80 percent of current operation funds of the Florida Education Finance Program shall be expended by basic program-cost categories in each school that generates the funds and by special program-cost categories in the district that generates the funds. A district-by-district accounting shall be made for all categorical programs identified in section 236.081(6), and such

funds shall be expended for the costs of the identified programs in accordance with regulations of the state board. All districts, in cooperation with the department, shall plan mutually compatible programs for the refinement of cost data and the improvement of the accounting and reporting system. The department shall report to the Legislature 60 days prior to the opening of the regular *session of each year* ~~1975 and 1976~~ Sessions on the status of district programs and the state's own programs for improvement of accounting and reporting of cost data on a statewide compatible basis. The report shall include the anticipated degree of implementation in the current fiscal year. The refinements and improvements identified in the district's plan and the state plan shall be accomplished by July 4, 1976. Each approved district plan and the state plan shall incorporate procedures, or the alternatives considered, for minimizing the number and complexity of reports from the school level.

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